

**South Precinct Email Community Newsletter**  
**June 9, 2009**



Dear Community Friends,

**Summertime Security Tips**

During warm weather months, we often see an increase in burglary and theft. Reasons for this include:

- Windows at residences left open for ventilation when residents are not home.
- Unattended open garages while residents are working in the yard or have briefly left the home.
- Unattended personal belongings while at a park or other recreational venue.
- Unattended personal belongings visible in our vehicles.

We want to remind you about the potential for an increase in burglary and theft and provide you with concrete steps you can take to reduce your vulnerability. Please share these tips with your neighbors.

**Close And Lock Windows; Limit How Far They Can Be Opened**

- Always close and lock windows whenever away from the home. While we understand the desire to ventilate the home when you are not there because of the heat, be aware that you make your home vulnerable and you create an opportunity for the burglar.
- If you want to leave windows open enough for ventilation, but not wide enough for someone to gain entry, use a dowel for sliding glass windows cut to allow the window to open no more than 4". Some windows have stops installed on the inside track, which help prevent the window from being opened too far. However, some of these are not very sturdy and can be opened given the right amount of force. Please consider augmenting those stops with track locks or with a simpler dowel. For double hung windows, consider sash pins to better secure the windows from being opened.

**Lock Your Doors**

- Install good quality dead bolt locks with at least a 1" throw on all exterior doors.
- Replace the existing screws in the strike plates with screws that are 3"-4" long. When a door is forced open, it is the jamb that splinters and gives, not the door. By securing the strike plates with 3"-4" long screws, you secure the jamb to the wall stud. When the deadbolt lock is engaged, the bolt goes into the jamb and the jamb is now secured to the framing of the home. This makes it much more difficult for a person to force open a properly locked door.

**Working In The Yard**

- If working in the yard in the back of the home, do not leave your front door open and/or unlocked. If you have a garage or storage unit that is out of your line of sight, be mindful of what is in plain view to anyone who may be walking or driving by. Close those doors as well.

**Secure Tools and Ladders**

- Secure all tools, including ladders, so they cannot be used to gain entry into your home or that of a neighbor.

**If Away For An Extended Period Of Time**

- If you're going to be away for an extended time, ask a friend or trusted neighbor to watch your home. If they see suspicious activity while you are gone, they will know to call 911 for you.
- Have the Post Office hold your mail and hold your newspaper delivery.
- Make it appear that your home is occupied. You can do this by having timers set within the home that will turn lights on and off. You may want to consider timers for your exterior lights or photocell attachments (which activate when it gets dark and go off when it becomes light).

**Do Not Leave Personal Belongings Unattended**

- Whether they are in a shopping cart or on a picnic blanket, always maintain positive control over your belongings. Never leave personal belongings unattended in your vehicle. Seattle has an incredibly high rate of theft of personal property from vehicles, particularly at public parks.

Until next time, Take Care and Stay Safe!

Captain Les Liggins, South Precinct Commander   Mark Solomon, South Precinct Crime Prevention Coordinator